

Sample Not For Resale

My Homeschool

ENGLISH

4A - Semester One



Knowledge Rich Language Arts For
Australian Home Education

Sample Not For Resale

My Homeschool English 4A – Semester One

Knowledge Rich Language Arts for Australian Home Education

By Michelle Morrow and Beth Frankish

ISBN: 978-1-7641771-8-4

Paperback Edition

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Published by My Homeschool

NSW, Australia.

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Introduction

My Homeschool English is a simple straightforward curriculum that cuts out the busy work and gets children writing, reading and thinking. Using knowledge rich themes, this language arts resource is your gateway to a holistic and effective English education.

Lessons include explicit writing instruction, reading practice, sentence level grammar, vocabulary, spelling, poetry appreciation, picture study, copy work, narration and compositions.

My Homeschool English requires minimal preparation. However, **you will need to be present to start most lessons** because there is a lot of teacher/student interaction. In most cases one lesson shall represent one day's work. However, as your child's teacher, you can best determine the amount of work that should be done. Lessons usually take between 15 to 30 minutes.

This resource is six months of work which is aimed towards the first half of the homeschool year. It has been broken down into 18 weeks with three lessons per week plus one weekly spelling activity. There are two 8-week sections, and the 9th week is used as a catch up assessment or revision.

Grade Level and Curriculum Alignment

This resource is intended for use with a child aged 9 - 10. It forms part of the My Homeschool curriculum for Year 4/Grade 4. This book is intended for use in the first semester (Term 1 and Term 2) of Year 4/Grade 4. It is best used in conjunction with our other resources that work on literacy and writing.

This has been written to follow the Australian Curriculum Version 9 Year 4, the WA Curriculum Year 4 and the NSW Curriculum Stage 2.

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Writing Lesson with a Knowledge Rich Curriculum

Writing lessons are inspired by Judith Hochman¹ and Charlotte Mason. The Hochman method is an explicit style of teaching writing that shows children how to write sentences and paragraphs. The Charlotte Mason method teaches writing mostly through narration and copywork. Both these methods are well suited for teaching in a homeschool setting.

Providing children with a knowledge rich curriculum and explicit writing instruction is one of the tenets of this English curriculum. Research shows² that teaching writing skills, without knowledge, impairs a child's ability to write well in the future. Although it may not be as apparent in the primary years, a lack of knowledge leads to comprehension problems when children progress to writing about more complex topics. Our goal is to teach writing skills while using worthwhile content.

Whilst the Hochman method is much more structured than the Charlotte Mason method, there are many shared ideas. Firstly, Charlotte Mason believed it was important to teach writing within a literary context. Secondly, she believed that sentences are the place to start teaching grammar. Thirdly, both utilise picture study to stimulate written content. Fourthly, Charlotte was anti twaddle, this meant a knowledge rich curriculum was a priority. Finally, the last one to highlight (there are more) is they both believed in teaching writing across the curriculum, in all subjects. So, even though this resource doesn't follow the Charlotte Mason Method strictly, many ideas coalesce, and you can still use her method as you teach other subjects.

Themes for My Homeschool English 4A

This semester we explore Classical Literature and World History, with an emphasis on Aesop's Fables and Judeo Christian religions.

¹ The Writing Revolution by J Hochman and N Wexler © 2017

² The Knowledge Gap by N Wexler © 2020

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Before You Start Skills

This resource assumes that your child has already been introduced to the following skills. However, if your child hasn't mastered these skills yet, don't worry! We will continue to work on developing them this year. But be aware, your child may need some additional support with these skills if they haven't learnt them before.

Prior Knowledge Skills

- Understands the difference between a sentence and a fragment. (See Appendix 1)
- Has learnt the different types of sentences. (See Appendix 2)
- Can identify an independent and dependent clause.
- Can expand a sentence using 'but', 'so' and 'because' and has learnt to write complex sentences. (See Appendix 3)
- Has had practise using conjunctions for sentence expansion. (See Appendix 4)
- Has been introduced to the idea that commas are used to separate meaning. (Appendix 5)
- Understands what an appositive is and how to use it in a sentence.
- Has been introduced to paragraph writing. (See Appendix 7)

Revision of Skills

For parents wanting to revise some of the writing, punctuation and grammar concepts used in this resource, we provide some initial teaching suggestions for teachers in the next section, plus we include teaching tips in some lessons, and we have an *Appendix* at the back of this resource, for key concepts. Please use these when needed.

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Suggestions to Teachers

We have provided some teaching suggestions and useful information that will help you understand how to get the most out of this resource.

Use a Notebook

Most lessons can be completed in this book. However, you will also need to write some lessons in a notebook or exercise book.

Presentation of the work is important. Instruct the student on using a margin, indentation of paragraphs and a title for the work. Encourage the student to use self-editing skills and proofread their work. If they see something wrong allow them to correct it (using an eraser or liquid paper).

Copywork and Handwriting

A natural precursor to teaching dictation begins with copywork. Copywork is simply writing out by hand or copying from other written texts or models. This practice has been employed for centuries as a technique for teaching writing skills to young and old scholars.

Cursive handwriting was introduced in Year 3/Grade 3.

Additional copywork provided within the My Homeschool curriculum will enhance handwriting skills.

Grammar and Punctuation

Every lesson should be a language lesson. We have aimed to teach grammar here in the context of writing. No grammar terms are given that won't be used within the student's work.

Take the opportunity to teach or reinforce certain aspects of grammar during your lessons, sprinkle in terms such as adjective, noun, pronoun and verb. Don't get too technical, you don't want to bamboozle the student.

When examining a passage, examine the punctuation also. Ask your student questions about specific punctuation marks. Have them read aloud the passage, paying attention to pause when the punctuation indicates. Remind them that they need to study not only the spelling of words, but also the punctuation used. The way you read a passage will help them work out the natural pauses for commas and full stops.

Keep an eye on the most common errors committed and focus on correcting those.

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Weekly Spelling - Morphology and Etymology

Each week we will be focussing on the morphology of words, with prefixes, suffixes and base words. We will also be looking into the etymology or root words.

Morphology is concerned with the structure of words. Etymology, on the other hand, is the study of the history of words, their origins, and how their form and meaning have changed over time.

Homophones (words that sound the same but have different spellings) and **heteronyms** (words that have the same spelling but sound different depending on the context) are also highlighted for your student to see.

HOW TO STUDY THE WORD LISTS

Some lessons have a short note to help you teach the lesson however teaching the lessons is very straightforward.

Here is a general guideline for your child to study the word lists. Teach them to:

Look closely at the words to be memorised.

Say the words out loud.

Divide words into **syllables** when appropriate.

Find out the **meaning of the word** if they don't already know it.

Copy the word a minimum of three times.

Reading, Comprehension and Vocabulary

Children are able to improve their writing by reading, however this is not the only component. Many of the observation and story lessons are starters for further writing exercises.

For a student to be able to comprehend a passage they need to have many skills cooperating to allow them to understand what they are reading. For some children this skill occurs naturally and we can 'test' it with simple oral questions or a written narration about the passage.

If you find that a student does not comprehend the passages you can look for various areas that will help you break down the process for them. Can they read the passage? If they need some help then you might try reading it with them or for them. If they cannot read it, trying to do dictation on the passage is not advisable.

Are they paying attention to the punctuation, pausing for commas or recognising a question mark?

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Do they understand the vocabulary used?

The use of jargon, slang or clichés may also inhibit comprehension.

What the reader knows (prior knowledge) of the passage being discussed also helps them comprehend a passage.

Reading words in the rich context of whole books is a very effective, natural method for increasing your student's **vocabulary**. When they find a word that they do not know, have them try to guess the meaning using the context of the extract and then either tell them the correct meaning or have them look it up in a dictionary. After they understand the meaning they can then put it into a sentence of their own either orally or written.

This is the ideal time to introduce the dictionary and alphabetical order.

Narration Lessons

The art of telling back or narration is employed in many lessons. This is an excellent skill to encourage. Fostering a keen memory and retention is a study skill that you want to develop into a life-long habit.

If a lesson requires a written narration, encourage them to write what they remember without requiring a specific format.

Composition

Some lessons give the student an opportunity to compose pieces of writing in a variety of text styles from an imaginative story to an informative text. Discuss what will be in their composition **orally first**. This oral lesson helps them to get their creative juices flowing and makes them realise that they do have something to write. If you skip this stage, you will often find resistance from reluctant writers. However, many children will still find writing down their own compositions a daunting experience. This is because their vocabulary far exceeds their writing ability. Therefore, use wisdom in getting them to write their composition. Assess each child individually and have them dictate to you some compositions if necessary. In my experience this skill grows slowly and needs patience and nurturing. Some children are natural writers others take a while and at this age the skill level is quite varied. Charlotte Mason did not expect children to write out their compositions until age 10, so if they aren't ready - don't panic; there is always next year! The focus should really be on students being able to write accurate and coherent sentences.

Presentation of some of their compositions should be in a digital format in order to teach them some computer skills.

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Poetry Appreciation

Poetry selection should be read aloud by the student, or to the student. The content of poetry uses the imagination and speaks directly to the heart. The images in poetry are wonderful. You don't need to turn a poem inside out to appreciate it. With younger children, make it your goal to help them enjoy the poems, especially the rhythm, leaving the techniques and jargon for later years.

Literature Discussions

A genre is the traditional classification of texts, such as fiction and non-fiction. This is the first classification your student should be able to make. You can ask them whether they think this is a true story or a pretend story.

You can begin introducing some discussion about other features of the stories and poems they are reading. Your aim here is to have your child notice and observe: why a text was written, who was it written to and what was the author trying to say. These discussions will help your child think about literature and give them some vocabulary for discussing literature in a literary way. Discussion prompts have been added to lessons.

Here are some short definitions of the text types used in this resource:

- Simple narrative: To tell a story.
- Procedure: To show how something is accomplished through a series of steps listed in chronological order.
- Persuasion: To put forward an argument or particular point of view.
- Simple report: To present factual information about a class of things, usually by classifying and describing their characteristics.

Writing Instruction

For years writing instruction has been based on the idea that students can learn to write 'naturally' in the same way they learn to talk. However, we know now this doesn't work for all children and with declining writing standards the need for explicit writing instruction is needed more than ever. With homeschooling this is easier as you are teaching alongside your child.

In Year 4 we introduce skills to teach your child how to write a paragraph. This includes the structure of a paragraph, how to write an outline, and how to identify key words. They will also practice writing their own paragraph on a topic. At this stage we are only expecting them to write one well-formed paragraph but in Year 5 they will begin to learn how to write a few paragraphs on a topic.

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End of Term Assessment

Writing assessments are provided at the end of each term (Weeks 9 and 18). You can use these assessments as a revision lesson or as an assessment tool.

Additional Reading and Writing

This resource encourages your student to learn how to spell, write and decode words, however, to develop their skills they will need additional practise across their curriculum.

Reading words in the rich context of whole books is a very effective, natural method for increasing your student's **vocabulary** so reading from additional sources including poetry should be encouraged.

Answer Guide & Appendix

Most lessons are self-explanatory. However, some answers are provided at the back of this resource. Parents should mark and correct children's work and give them feedback when possible. For your convenience, we have added some additional teaching helps in the **Appendix**.

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Week One—Lesson 1 – Prefix ‘ant/anti’

Teacher’s Note: A prefix is a small group of letters added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning. It’s like a little tag that helps us understand a word better. For example, in the word "unhappy," "un-" is a prefix that makes "happy" mean the opposite, so "unhappy" means "not happy."

Prefix: ‘ant/anti’

Meaning: against / opposite to

Example: anti + septic = antiseptic

- anti is a prefix that means against or opposite to.
- septic is an adjective that is related to infection by harmful microorganisms, particularly bacteria.
- antiseptic means something that works to stop harmful bacteria.

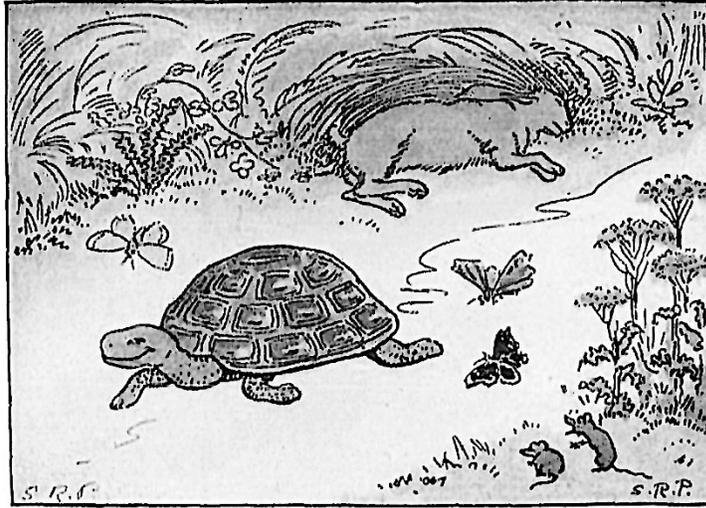
Try to figure out how the prefix changes the meaning of these base words.

Base Word	Add Prefix	Copy	Copy
clockwise			
septic			
hero			
climax			
social			
virus			
perspirant			

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LESSON 2—THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE – ORAL NARRATION AND

COMPOSITION



"What a slow fellow you are!" said a hare to a tortoise. "I feel sorry for anyone who has to creep along as you do."

"Slow as I am, I can beat you," replied the tortoise.

"You think you can beat me, do you?" said the hare. "Let us race to that big tree."

The tortoise started at once and kept straight on. The hare went a little way and then lay down and took a nap. By and by he awoke and ran as fast as he could.

But when he reached the big tree the tortoise was there waiting for him.

"Slow and steady wins the race," said the tortoise.

ACTIVITY

Questions 1 to 3 should be answered orally.

1. Retell the fable of "The Hare and the Tortoise".
2. What do you think the moral of this story is?
3. Have you ever heard the phrase "Slow and steady wins the race"? What do you think it means?
4. Write a similar story and include some direct quotations in the story.

Use this story outline about two boys:

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LESSON 7—TOWN MOUSE AND COUNTRY MOUSE – ORAL

NARRATION

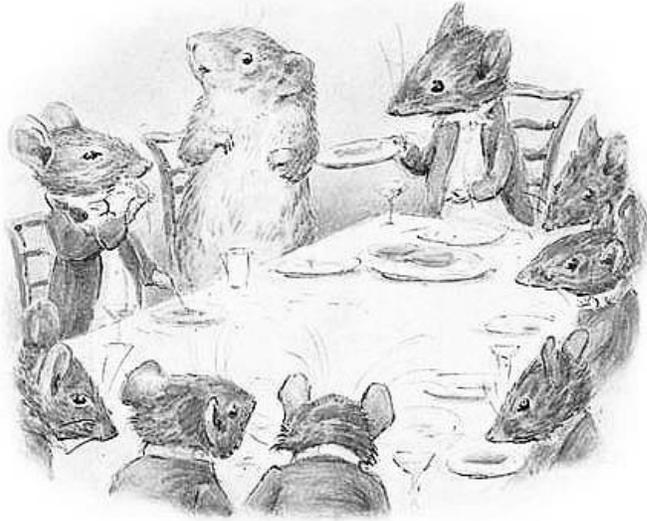


Illustration by Beatrix Potter

Now you must know that a Town Mouse once upon a time went on a visit to his cousin in the country. He was rough and ready, this cousin, but he loved his town friend and made him heartily welcome. Beans and bacon, cheese and bread, were all he had to offer, but he offered them freely.

The Town Mouse rather turned up his long nose at this country fare, and said: “I cannot understand,

Cousin, how you can put up with such poor food as this, but of course you cannot expect anything better in the country; come you with me and I will show you how to live. When you have been in town a week you will wonder how you could ever have stood a country life.”

No sooner said than done: the two mice set off for the town and arrived at the Town Mouse’s residence late at night. “You will want some refreshment after our long journey,” said the polite Town Mouse, and took his friend into the grand dining-room. There they found the remains of a fine feast, and soon the two mice were eating up jellies and cakes and all that was nice.

Suddenly they heard growling and barking. “What is that?” said the Country Mouse.

“It is only the dogs of the house,” answered the other.

“Only!” said the Country Mouse. “I do not like that music at my dinner.”

Just at that moment the door flew open, in came two huge dogs, and the two mice had to scamper down and run off.

“Good-bye, Cousin,” said the Country Mouse.

“What! Going so soon?” said the other.

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“Yes,” he replied, “Better beans and bacon in peace than cakes and ale in fear.”

ACTIVITY

1. Retell this story as an oral narration.
2. Discuss: What is the moral, or lesson of this story?
3. Finish these sentences:
 - A. The Town Mouse invites his cousin to the city, but _____

 - B. Just as they were having dinner two huge dogs arrived, so _____

 - C. The Country Mouse decides to leave the city because _____

LESSON 8—PRONOUNS: THIS - THAT - THESE - THOSE

This, that, these and *those* are pronouns.

This (singular) and **these** (plural) we use to talk about things near us. **That** (singular) and **those** (plural) we use to talk about things not near us.

ACTIVITY

1. Fill the blanks with *this, that, these, or those*:
 - A. _____ tree is an elm and _____ one is a maple.
 - B. _____ books are mine and _____ are yours.
 - C. _____ flower in my hand is blue.
 - D. I think _____ birds have a nest in the tree.
 - E. _____ apple you gave me is sour.
 - F. Did you buy many apples like _____ one?

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LESSON 15—WRITING – IDENTIFY FRAGMENTS

To Remember:

- A sentence must contain at least one clause.
- A clause must contain a subject and a predicate.

Subject: something or someone to write about, contains a **noun** or **pronoun**

Predicate: Tells what the subject does or is, and contains a **verb**

If a sentence does not have either a subject, or a predicate it is not a proper sentence. It is a fragment.

Here are some examples of fragments:

- the dog (*missing predicate*)
- waved at the children (*missing subject*)
- the old lamp and the big grandfather clock (*missing predicate*)
- the movie of the year (*missing predicate*)

ACTIVITY

1. Write “S” if the words form a complete sentence, then capitalise and punctuate the sentences.
2. Write “F” if the words are a sentence fragment, then change the fragments into complete sentences.
3. Label which are fragments (F) and which are sentences (S):

(punctuation and capitals have been removed)

A. the hare and the tortoise _____

B. he was slower _____

C. the boy was lonely _____

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LESSON 22—COMPOSITION



From a painting by John George Brown, The Flower Girl (or Tough Customers)

ACTIVITY

1. Discussion Questions.

- A. What story does the picture tell?
- B. How old do you think the little girl is?
- C. From what kind of a home do you imagine she may have come?
- D. Why do you think she is selling flowers?
- E. What do you think the boys are saying?
- F. Do you imagine that they will buy any flowers?
- G. How do you think these boys make money?
- H. Can you suggest another name for the picture?

2. Write a short story in your notebook about this picture. Begin it this way:

As I was going down the street I _____.

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LESSON 24—PREPOSITIONS – CHOICE OF WORDS

A preposition is a word that shows the relationship between a noun (or pronoun) and another element in the sentence. It indicates the location, direction, time, manner, or other relationships between the words in a sentence. Prepositions are usually short words, such as "in," "on," "under," "over," "between," "before," and "after."

ACTIVITY

1. Choose words from the list below to fill blanks in the following sentences:

on	to	by	above
around	into	for	across
at	in	under	after

A. The book is _____ the table.

B. The pencil is on the floor _____ the table.

C. Nellie lives _____ the street.

D. Is your mother _____ home?

E. I think she has gone _____ the concert.

F. We threw sticks _____ the water, and Rover went after them.

G. The blue sky is _____ us.

H. The air is _____ us.

2. Choose 5 words from the list and create 5 sentences of your own.

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LESSON 36—SENTENCE EXPANSION

To Remember

A sentence is a complete thought.

It must contain a subject and a verb.

Here are some sentences:

- She ran.
- Jane walked.
- Dad jumped.

These are fine to use sometimes, but it would be very boring if all our sentences were like this.

So, we need to think of ways to make our sentences more interesting! By adding more information, we can expand sentences to make them more interesting.

Including when, who/what, (did) what, where, why and/or how will make your sentence more informative for the reader.

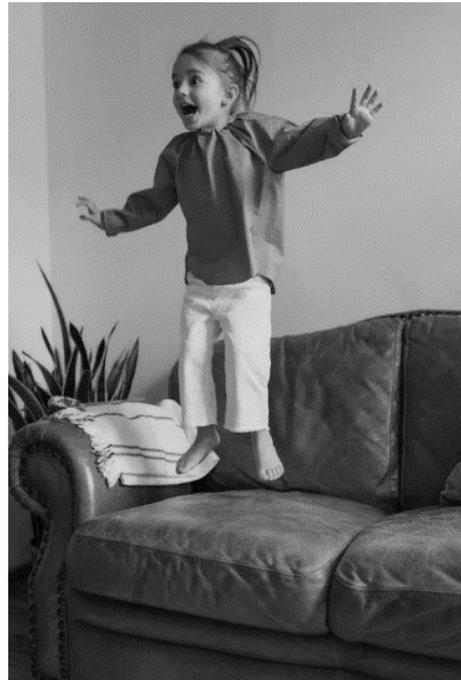
See how you can use these simple questions to expand this simple sentence:

She jumped.

- **When:** on Christmas morning
- **Who:** a brown haired girl
- **Where:** on a leather couch in the living room
- **Why:** because she was excited about presents

Extended sentence:

On Christmas morning, the little brown-haired girl jumped on the leather couch because she was excited to open her presents.



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ACTIVITY

1. Use this picture prompt to expand this simple sentence: *They played.*



- **When:** _____
- **Who:** _____
- **Where:** _____
- **Why:** _____

2. Write the expanded sentence in your notebook.

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LESSON 42—RUN-ON SENTENCES – EDIT THE PASSAGE

Teacher's Note: There are intentional mistakes in the below passage.

In Aesop's fable, "The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing," a cunning wolf disguises himself in a sheepskin to infiltrate a flock of sheep.

The wolf successfully gains the trust of the unsuspecting sheep and is able to move freely among them his true nature eventually reveals itself when he seizes the opportunity to attack and devours a little lamb what a bad wolf.

The wolf is eventually killed when the shepherd decides he wants to eat some mutton meat and kills the wolf he thinks the wolf is a sheep.

The original moral of the tale is that deception can lead to harm even for the evildoer we now think of it as a warning not to trust someone who may be a "wolf in sheep's clothing".

ACTIVITY

1. Read the above passage aloud.
2. Highlight any run-on sentences.
3. Add punctuation or a conjunction to make correct sentences.
4. Separate the clauses into more than one sentence.

LESSON 44—CORRECT USE OF WORDS – ADJECTIVES

- A. Tom and Henry are both tall, but I believe Henry is taller.
- B. There are several tall boys in the class, but Frank is the tallest.

ACTIVITY

1. In the first sentence how many boys are compared? _____

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LESSON 47—MOSES – SIMPLE NARRATIVE



Lawrence Alma-Tadema, The Finding of Moses, 1904

The Finding of Moses

Many hundred years ago, in the land of Egypt, a Hebrew mother placed her baby boy in a tiny boat made of bulrushes and hid him among the reeds by the riverside. She did this because Pharaoh, the king of the country, had ordered that all the Hebrew baby boys should be killed. The mother left the child hidden there, while his sister Miriam stood afar off to watch.

At about noon the daughter of Pharaoh went down to the river to bathe. As she and her maids walked slowly along the bank, they saw the boat among the rushes. Wondering what it could be, the princess bade one of her maids to bring it to her.

There in the boat of bulrushes they found the baby boy. When he cried, the king's daughter had compassion on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."

Then said his sister Miriam to the princess, "Shall I go and call a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?"

And the king's daughter said to her, "Go."

The sister ran quickly and called the baby's mother.

Pharaoh's daughter said to the mother, "Take the child and nurse it for me, and I will pay thee thy wages."

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After the child had grown larger, he went to live with the king's daughter as her son. She called his name Moses, for she said, "I drew him out of the water."

ACTIVITY

1. Read the story and then retell it.
2. Describe the picture.
3. In your notebook, write the following sentence from dictation.

At about noon the daughter of Pharaoh went down to the river to bathe.

LESSON 48—LINKING WORDS: ORAL LESSON

Teacher's Note: When teaching writing, especially the concept of linking words, to your child, it's important to present the information in an accessible and understandable manner. Linking words, also known as transition words or connectors, are used to connect ideas in sentences and paragraphs. They help to show the relationship between sentences and paragraphs, making the text flow more smoothly and logically.

- A. Mary went to the shop.
- B. **First**, she found a trolley.
- C. **Then**, she filled it with her groceries.
- D. **However**, she couldn't find any fresh apples, but she found tinned apples instead.
- E. **Next**, she paid the cashier for her food.
- F. **Finally**, she finished the shopping and went home.

ACTIVITY

1. The words in bold are linking words that we use to make our sentences sound more connected. Use the model above to discuss one of these situations:
 - A. A visit to the library.
 - B. A visit to the chemist.
 - C. A visit to a friend's place.